

**DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
(COLLEGE OF THE DESERT)  
ACADEMIC SENATE CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS**

**Preamble**

We, the members of the faculty of the Desert Community College District, believe in the practice of shared governance as outlined in AB1725. At College of the Desert, the Academic Senate is the primary decision making body representing the faculty in matters related to educational policy and faculty involvement in campus affairs. We adhere to our role through AB1725 and Collegial Consultation that outlines our responsibilities to our faculty body, our students, and in our collegial endeavors with our administrative partners and the college Board of Trustees.

**Purpose**

The Academic Senate is the official voice of the Faculty on educational and professional matters.

**Article I - Name**

The official name of this organization shall be the Academic Senate of the Desert Community College District here-and-after called the Senate.

**Article II - Membership**

All Full-Time and Adjunct academic employees of the Desert Community College District, here-and-after referred to as the District, are entitled to representation by the Senate.

**Article III - Organization**

The officers of the Senate elected in at-large elections will consist of the President and the Faculty Chairs of the Curriculum, Educational Policies and Practices, Educational Technologies and Distance Education, Faculty Development, and Outcomes and Assessment Committee.

Eligibility for the Office of President requires that the elected President shall have achieved tenure or shall have concurrently achieved tenure with the beginning of the term of office.

All officers shall serve two-year terms. The President, as well as the Chairs of the Educational Technologies and Distance Education Committee, and the Faculty Development Committee, shall be elected during the Spring Semester of odd numbered years. The Faculty Chairs of the Educational Policies and Practices Committee, the Outcomes and Assessment Committee, and the Curriculum Committee shall be elected during the Spring Semester of the even numbered years.

The Senate shall consist of the aforementioned officers and Faculty Representatives elected by each Academic Unit<sup>1</sup>, and Adjunct Faculty Representatives<sup>2</sup> elected at large by the Adjunct Faculty. One At-Large Adjunct Representative is also to serve on each of the Senate's standing committees and is selected by the Adjunct Senate Representatives.

Each Academic Unit will elect an alternate for each Representative to the Senate and its Committees. If a Representative cannot be present at a Senate or Committee meeting, the alternate will attend in his/her place. Election of Representatives and Alternates is conducted by the faculty of the Academic Unit and is to occur before the end of the spring semester following the at-large elections of Senate Officers, and Representatives will be expected to serve for the entire academic year.

Officers and Senate members shall assume the duties of their offices at the end of the Spring Semester with their term of duty beginning and concluding immediately after graduation of Spring Semester.

In the event the President resigns, the Executive Committee will recommend a replacement. In the event other officers resign, the members of the committee chaired by the resignee will recommend a Chair to fill the remaining portion of the term. This recommendation will be sent to the Senate for endorsement.

#### **Article IV - Responsibilities of Officers**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Senate. The President shall: 1. Assure that the officers and committee members perform their assigned duties; 2. Implement the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Senate; 3. Represent the Senate at appropriate College functions, or assign a designee to do so.

The Chair of the Curriculum Committee shall preside over meetings of this college-wide committee that serve as the primary recommending body on matters relating to curriculum. The Chair is responsible for informing the Senate of Committee recommendations so that they may be reviewed by the Senate. The Chair shall fulfill the duties of the Senate President in the absence of the Senate President.

The Chair of the Educational Policies and Practices Committee shall preside over this college-wide committee that serves as the primary recommending body on matters relating to academic standards, grading, assessment and matriculation. The Chair is

---

- **<sup>1</sup> Academic Unit Representatives**

Academic Units are defined as a group of faculty who work together on issues that fall under the purview of the Senate. The number of faculty in an Academic Unit can vary depending upon the needs of the specific Unit, but membership shall be enough faculty to fill all Senate Committee representative needs. Each Academic Unit is to elect no later than April one (1) Representative and one (1) alternate to the Senate and its standing committees for the following academic year. For more specific details, see the Academic Senate Portal Site.

Academic Units may be reorganized before spring elections at the impetuous of the represented faculty.

- **<sup>2</sup> Adjunct Faculty Representation**

Adjunct faculty representation shall consist of two (2) positions. The term of office shall be two (2) consecutive academic years. The Adjunct Faculty shall elect one new at-large representative each year. In the first year of a term, the new representative is a non-voting member of the Academic Senate. In the second year of a term, this representative becomes the voting representative for the Adjunct Faculty. The person receiving the next highest number of votes shall be the Alternate for the next academic year.

responsible for informing the Senate of Committee recommendations so that they may be reviewed by the Senate

The Chair of the Educational Technologies and Distance Education Committee shall preside over this college-wide committee that serves as the primary recommending body on matters relating to educational technologies and distance learning. The Chair is responsible for informing the Senate of Committee recommendations so that they may be reviewed by the Senate.

The Chair of the Faculty Development Committee shall preside over this college-wide committee that serves as the primary recommending body on matters relating to staff development policies and processes, professional advancement, sabbatical leaves and the development of the Flexible Calendar Program. The Chair is responsible for informing the Senate of Committee recommendations so that they may be reviewed by the Senate.

The Chair of the Outcomes and Assessments Committee shall preside over this college-wide committee that serves as the primary recommending body on Student Learning Outcomes, Outcomes Assessment, and Program Review. The Chair is responsible for informing the Senate of Committee recommendations so that they may be reviewed by the Senate

The above officers and an Adjunct Faculty Representative shall comprise the Executive Board of the Senate.

Academic Senate standing committee voting members shall be faculty only. Administrators may participate as a resource on Senate committees but they shall not serve as co-chairs or have voting rights on Senate committees.

Agendas and Minutes of all Committees shall be distributed to all faculty. Committee recommendations on policy will be placed on the Academic Senate agenda for action. Curriculum Committee recommendations on Curriculum shall be placed on the Academic Senate Consent Agenda for action.

### **Article V - Meetings**

The full Senate meets monthly, or as needed, to conduct regular Senate business. The Senate minutes will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees and made available to all Faculty.

Meetings with the College President and/or other administrative representatives will be conducted on a mutually agreeable basis and the Senate shall be kept informed of such meetings.

Any non-regular meetings of the Senate may be called by the President of the Senate or upon petition of a quorum of the Senate membership. Such meetings shall require notification of members at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meetings. It will be made clear for what purpose such a meeting is being called.

A quorum shall consist of one-half of the full membership of the Senate's Executive Board and elected Representatives. A resolution or action on policy by the Senate shall require an affirmative vote of one-half, plus one of those present for passage when a quorum is present.

The official parliamentary authority of the Senate shall be Robert's Rules of Order, new revised.

### **Article VI - Relationship of Senate to Faculty**

The Senate is the voice of the Faculty. The Senate shall be responsible to and responsive of the faculty at all times and Representatives shall act in accordance with their constituents after suitable discussion has been carried out. The Senate and any of its committees may act with the full authority of the faculty only on those matters upon which the Senate as a whole, has taken a position through the form of motions or resolutions (see Resolution Guidelines and Processes) in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution. Actions of the Senate shall be effective immediately upon passage unless otherwise stated in the motion.

### **Article VII - Ratification of the Constitution of the Senate**

Ratification of this Constitution will require a minimum of two-thirds affirmative vote of all full time faculty.

Copies of the proposed ratification shall be distributed to all full time members of the faculty for discussion two weeks prior to voting on the ratification. Voting on the ratification shall be by secret ballot sent via U.S. Mail or e-mail.

### **Amendment of By Laws**

Amendment of By-Laws will require a minimum of half plus one of all full time faculty.

### **By-Laws**

#### **Section I - Nominations and Elections**

The President of the Senate shall appoint a Nominations and Elections Committee of three (3) Senate members by February of each year and submit a call for elections by the end of February. Candidates may be either be nominated by fellow faculty members, or self-nominate. Nominated faculty shall provide a statement of candidacy to the Nominations and Elections Committee for inclusion with ballot materials.

Nominations will close approximately 30-31 days after they are opened. At the faculty Senate meeting following the closing of nominations, Candidates will have three minutes to speak.

Within five (5) working days after nominations are closed, the ballot shall be prepared and distributed via U.S. Mail to the address of the voter on file in the College Personnel Office. On marking the ballot, the voter shall seal and place the

ballot in the supplied, unmarked envelope. This sealed, unmarked container with the ballot, shall be placed and sealed in the self-addressed, stamped envelope bearing the mailing address: "President, Academic Senate, College of the Desert, 43-500 Monterey Avenue, Palm Desert, CA 92260." The voter shall sign over his/her printed name on the line provided on the front side of the mailing envelope. Unsigned, outside envelopes shall not be counted. Place the mailing envelope in the U. S. Mail service receptacle. The mailed ballot must bear a date no later than midnight of the tenth day after the date the ballot was mailed to the voter as shown by the U.S. mailing date stamp. Signed mail ballots shall be verified by the Nominations and Elections Committee after 5:00 p.m., not less than five calendar days after the midnight date of mailing. After verifying the signature on the outer envelope from the eligible voter record, the inner sealed ballot-containing envelope shall be physically separated. The mailing envelopes shall be immediately destroyed to ensure no ballot matching can occur. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall open the ballots and count the votes. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes shall be elected. Ties for first place shall be resolved in a run-off election. Election results will be shared immediately with the College community by the Senate President.

Nominations for the At-Large Adjunct Faculty will be handled in the same manner; however, elections will be handled electronically by the senior adjunct Senate representative.

## **Section 2 - Appointments of Faculty to Committees, Councils, and Task Forces**

The Senate shall either appoint or otherwise ratify the appointment of all faculty members to all college-wide and district-wide standing and *ad hoc* committees, councils, task forces, and other similar bodies except for (1) internal committees or councils functioning exclusively within academic divisions, departments, or programs, or (2) subcommittees composed only of members from an existing body; or three (3) seats designated for the exclusive bargaining agent of the faculty. In addition, the Senate fills by appointment or by ratification all reserved or requested faculty seats on all employment committee for all full-time appointments, district-wide, with the exception of seats that may be reserved for the exclusive bargaining agent of the faculty. In instances in which committee seats are specifically reserved for faculty representatives from identified disciplines, departments, or schools, the Senate shall rely upon recommendations or nominations from those faculty groups. In all instances, senate appointments are subject to the agreement of the appointee.

## **Section 3 – Standing Sub-Committees**

The Equivalency Committee is a standing subcommittee of the Academic Senate, reporting to the Educational Policies and Practices Committee. The Chair of the Equivalency Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Academic Senate and confirmed by a majority vote of the Academic Senate. The Equivalency Committee meets irregularly as needed. Membership and Responsibilities of the Equivalency Committee are subject to the provisions of the Board Policy and

## Administrative Procedures on Equivalency.

The Sabbatical Committee is a standing subcommittee of the Academic Senate, reporting to the Faculty Development Committee. The Chair of the Sabbatical Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Development Committee and confirmed by a majority vote of the Academic Senate. The Sabbatical Committee meets irregularly as needed.

The Professional Advancement Committee is a standing subcommittee of the Academic Senate, reporting to the Faculty Development Committee. The Chair of the Professional Advancement Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Development Committee and confirmed by a majority vote of the Academic Senate. The Professional Advancement Committee meets irregularly as needed.

The Distance Education Committee is a standing subcommittee of the Academic Senate, reporting to the Educational Technologies and Distance Education Committee. The Chair of the Distance Education Committee is the Distance Education Coordinator, or designee appointed/approved by the Academic Senate. The Distance Education Committee meets irregularly as needed.

## **Section 4 – Video Conferencing Meeting Attendance**

Faculty Senate Members may attend Senate meetings via video conference if the public notice of the meeting indicates that video conferencing will be used. Members may participate through video conference if teaching off campus. Video conferencing should only be used if pressing circumstances prohibit attendance in person. Faculty members participating by video conference as described above will be considered present and in attendance for purposes of determining the existence of a quorum and when voting. Video conference locations must be published in the agenda and made public; therefore, locations will be limited to College of the Desert sites where classes are offered. All votes taken during a video conference must be conducted by rollcall. This policy is in accordance with CA open meetings law and Brown Act. 54953.

### Constitution and Bylaws:

1994 Sep 14	Constitution and Bylaws with Copper Mountain ratified
1996 Aug	Constitution and Bylaws with Copper Mountain amended
1999 Apr 14	Constitution and Bylaws College of the Desert ratified
2012 Feb 09	Constitution and Bylaws College of the Desert amended
2012 Mar 08	Constitution and Bylaws College of the Desert correction of amendment
2016 Apr 20	Bylaws College of the Desert amendment
2017 Apr 20	Bylaws College of the Desert amendment